1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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Preface

THE pages that follow describe scenes in the lives of a Negro people living in isolation in the interior of Dutch Guiana, South America. These Negroes are the descendants of runaway slaves imported from Africa, who took refuge in the dense Guiana bush and established African villages along the rivers whose rapids are their fortifications. The end of the seventeenth century already found these Negroes in constantly growing numbers up the Suriname River, and before the middle of the next century they were sufficiently organized to make repeated raids on the plantations for guns and gunpowder, for machetes and women. Several campaigns were conducted against them, but eventually final treaties were concluded with the Dutch owners of the colony, which guaranteed them their freedom. Today when a Bush Negro drinks with a white man his toast is "Free!"

Three tribal groups go to make up this Bush Negro population. The Saramacca tribe, of whom we write, is found in the heart of the colony along the upper reaches of the Suriname River (called by the Bush Negroes the "Saramacca," and hence so named in this book), and farther south along the Gran Rio and the Pikien Rio. This tribe has had the least contact with outside influences, and it is the Saramacca language which differs most from that spoken by the Negroes of the coastal region. The second is the Awka tribe, found mainly along the Marowyne (Maroni) River, which forms the boundary between French and Dutch Guiana; there are in addition several Awka villages on the lower Suriname. The third tribe, the Boni,

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175 Now we were in the true, true Saramacca country, the land which the Bush Negro feels to be entirely his own. White men, it is true, had been here before, but only a handful, and the gods of the river, who were powerful, saw to it that of these not many got back to the white man's land. True, true Saramacca country! Every Bush Negro we met on the lower river spoke of it with the deepest feeling.

"It is all right here," one man after another had said, "but wait until you see the upper river, the true-true Saramacca!"

It was here that the first Bush Negro villages had been built, though this seemed fabulous to the strangers who, in strong boats, guided by men who were wise in the moods and courses of the river, had had nine days of hard travel on the way. The lower-river villages began to appear only after peace had been declared and had proved lasting. Eighty-six years ago men from the upper river who lived beyond the Granman's own village, in the Grand Rio, had come down and built the village of Gansee, which was some four hours' paddling upstream from the railhead.

We spoke of this to Bibifo, who himself was born in this country.

"You may well wonder, white man."

361 103 Here was no danger of having to wrest a camp from the bush at night, when the short tropical dusk came to overtake the traveler. Villages followed close, one upon the other. Here was Ma'lobbi, where the beauty of the wood [322] carver's art had made us linger beyond the time allotted to us for making the journey from S'ei to Asindopo Lantiwe. Here was Hei Kununu—High Mountain—which rose on a [133] steep slope above the river, and was pleasant to see after the long stretches of flat plain that lay below. Semoisi, noted for its riches, was there, and Pempeh, bearing a name well known in the Ashanti country in Africa. Here villages 203 were so close to each other that they could announce our approach on the talking drums.

"What is it we hear, Bayo?" we would ask.

"They are cutting down trees, Bak'a."

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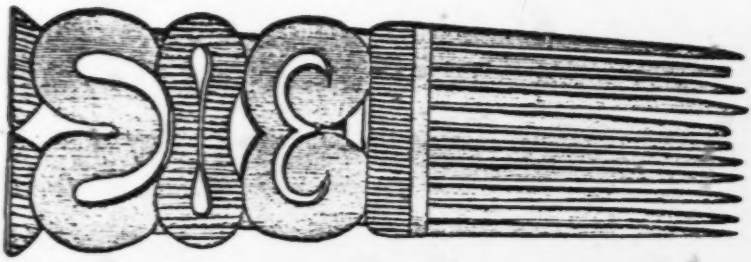
feared by all who themselves do not have Kromanti. Obia Kromanti warns and protects and heals, but its powers are only for those who belong to the Kromanti group.

Whether Kromanti is the African warrior society preserved in this bush, it is impossible to say. If this were the case, then the definite military organization of many of the West African societies should be present. The military character of any group among the Bush Negroes could not even be hinted at, of course, without the greatest caution. In their descriptions of the Kromanti, our intimates among the Bush Negroes never indicated in any way the existence of such an organization. Even leading questions brought out only unqualified denials instead of the revealing answers "I do not know," or "Massa Gadu sabi." Yet there are undoubtedly secrets which Kromanti men do not share with outsiders, and we remembered that when a Kromanti man dies, he must be "separated" from the Kromanti group just as he is "separated" from his family and from his village.

About the very meaning of the word Kromanti there can only be speculation. During the time of the slave trade, there were two ports on the Gold Coast of Africa known as Little and Great Coromantyne. From these ports came the slaves who, in the New World, were known as Coromantyne slaves. These slaves were so warlike, so prone to cause uprisings, that only English and Dutch colonies consented to buy them and in these colonies when slave rebellions broke out to alarm the white planters, they were led by the proud Coromantyne slaves.

It would not be strange, therefore, if the same term was carried over into the free civilization of this bush to typify the obia which protected and watched over the fighters who had won this freedom.

Other indications point to the same assumption. The strongest spirits of the Kromanti, those which inspire the greatest fear when they possess men of a village are Tigri and Djadja. Tigri is the jaguar, Djadja is often vaguely translated by our word "devil." If we again turn to the West African societies, we find that one of the most dreaded



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Chapter One

THE BLACK REBELLION

A GUINEA SLAVER, tacking up to Paramaribo. In the hold lay shackled Negroes, their bare bodies glistening with sweat. "Black Ivory" they were called. U48 175

Entrapped savages from the West Coast, transported nearly three thousand miles in slaving ships to the Dutch settlement in South America. Three months at sea, and they looked like leather-covered skeletons, those who were still alive.

Packed in a small space, without enough room to lie down, the slaves were forced to take turns at stretching out on the deck to sleep. The others squatted close together, straddling the ones lying down. The night air being considered pernicious, the portholes were closed when evening came, leaving the blacks to suffocate during the fetid dark hours. Sometimes the bare planks, combined with the rolling motion of the ship, rubbed off skin and flesh, leaving patches of bone exposed. Blood and filth were strewn about in an indescrib-

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1 [For caption, see category 116, p. 204. -- Analyst]

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able mess. Only one in twenty survived the ordeal; the bodies of those who succumbed were dropped overboard to be covered over in a swirl of water. The ship went on.

The Surinam is a tan river. There is a sharp line where it meets the deep green of the Atlantic. Twenty miles up the winding stream is Paramaribo, the end of the voyage.

Hot wind blew the ship along, wafting away the odour of flesh. The ship turned and tacked around the broad slow bends of the river. Some of the Negroes realized that the voyage was over and became hysterical, expecting to be killed and eaten. Kidnapped from many different tribes of Africa, speaking no language but their local dialects, they had no way of knowing the fate in store for them. The cruelties of the voyage made them anticipate the worst. As a matter of fact, their immediate fate was to be sold to the planters of the Surinam, to labour on the sugar plantations of the colony. Perhaps the mangrove swamps beside the river recalled their former home.

On the western coast of Africa, between the Senegal River and the Congo country, particularly the Gulf of Guinea, lay the hunting-ground of the slave trader. Somewhere along the Ivory Coast or Gold Coast these Negroes were captured. To facilitate the handling of large numbers of slaves, forts were set up at intervals along the coast, under the command of Europeans. Here Negroes were accumulated in large pens, awaiting shipment. These "factories," as they were called, obtained the blacks by kidnapping them, or by bartering with tribes of the interior, who took them

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captive in jungle wars. A raid on an African village, for the purpose of obtaining captives to sell as slaves, is described by an eye-witness, Captain Richard Drake, an Englishman who was captured and held prisoner by a tribe in Dahomey:

"When the night was somewhat advanced, the main portion of our force set off in small parties to creep on the unsuspecting town, and in about an hour a bright flame shot up followed by a chorus of yells, cries, and groans. In a few minutes the whole valley seemed in flames. From the brow of the hill I could see the Dahoman warriors running about whirling their weapons. The naked women and children were flying in all directions and in the light from the blazing huts I could see the wretched people rushing from the flames to be received on the spear points of their enemies. It was nearly morning when the work of capture and massacre was finished. . . . When we reached our valley there was a great feast and old King Mammee sat on his pile of sheepskins and distributed feathers to the principal men, and his priests made a solemn sacrifice of two young boys to the King's fetish. The poor lads were cut to pieces with knives by the women soldiers and afterwards burned before the idol."

Massacred by enemy tribes in the interior, taken to the coast face downward in dugout canoes, thrown into slave pens where many died, then the horrible voyage down the Middle Passage on a blood-washed slaving ship, to work under the lash on the sugar plantations of Dutch Guiana,

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these captive Negroes experienced the lowest degree of human misery. They were mere beasts. Their civilizations of Songhay and the Mellestine were forgotten.

Paramaribo, where the slaves landed, was then the only city in the Dutch settlement. It resembled a little piece of Holland transplanted to South America. Settled originally by the British, it was given to Holland in 1674 in exchange for the present city of New York, which was a crafty trade. Settlers from Holland gave the colony a Dutch atmosphere that it retains to this day. On this "wild coast" were to be found women in wooden shoes and burghers with long clay pipes.

A crowd usually gathered on the wharves at Paramaribo to watch a slaver put in. Planters in enormous hats and silken shirts walked conspicuously about, anxious to obtain more man-power for their fields. The Negroes were not going to be eaten, as they feared, but perhaps that would have been preferable for some of them. A landing of slaves in Dutch Guiana, some time later, was witnessed by Captain Drake:

"The blacks were landed at once and two days later were placed on sale in the market. There was a scarcity of hands on the sugar plantations and good prices were paid for the slaves. The Dutch maids, in short green jackets and scarlet petticoats, walked around inspecting the naked Africans as if it were a common thing. The auctioneer sat on a high chair at one end of the large room and the slaves stood on a stool in front of him. He made them turn round about,

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as they stood in their breech-cloths before the people, and the purchasers walked up and felt of them to try their flesh and soundness. The darkies were obliged to go through every sort of motion. It seemed at times as if their arms would be pulled out of joint or their jaws cracked by some of the Dutchmen. One dame was not satisfied until she forced a wench to screech by squeezing her breast cruelly. In two days the vendue was over. The grown men fetched as high as a thousand guilders and the boys and girls and women from seven to eight hundred, which were considered good prices."

The slaves were then put to work in the sugar fields. The overseers treated them cruelly and enjoyed it, with the callousness of their century; overseers in Virginia and Jamaica were doing the same with no less zeal. The planter's lash was often "incrusted with blood."

Inevitably some Negroes tried to run away. Near by was the jungle, a refuge from the white terror. From time to time runaway blacks succeeded in escaping into the bush. There they joined other fugitives, forming small bands.

The character of the country favoured them. The undergrowth is so thick that overland travel is impossibly laborious and slow. The rivers, save for a short distance near the ocean, are unnavigable because of their torrential rapids. The Surinam, up which the slave ships sailed to Paramaribo, has seldom been explored to its extreme upper reaches; it is *terra incognita* to white men.

The fugitives were quite at home in the jungle. In this

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natural sanctuary they reverted to their African habits of living and began to multiply. Recapture being impossible, their bondage to the white man was definitely over. They propagated and prospered, but they did not forget those slave days behind them. Armed with firelocks and lances they began making raids on the outlying plantations. Revenge!

Resolute bands of them would descend on a plantation and massacre the whites. After carrying off the gunpowder, firelocks, and hatchets which they badly needed, burning the mansion, and freeing the slaves, they would disappear as quickly as they had come, leaving the colonists fuming at their impotence to punish them.

By 1726, but fifty years after the Dutch acquired Surinam, there was a large body of rebel slaves living in the bush around the Saramacca River. They were intrepid and merciless raiders—where would they have learned the meaning of mercy? Two years later a small military expedition was sent out from Paramaribo against them, but it was ineffectual. Back in the bush the Negroes were more than a match for the white man.

In 1730 the colonists succeeded in capturing eleven Bush Negro rebels and killed them by slow torture. One black was hanged to a tree by an iron hook thrust through his ribs; after being suspended thus for several days he finally died. Two were burned to death over a slow fire. Six women were broken on the rack, and two girls were decapitated. The tortures were endured heroically until death brought release.

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The rebels were enraged. Their depredations became more fierce. Now a rich planter would be paddling desperately down to Paramaribo in the dark jungle night, leaving behind him a burning mansion in whose eerie light infuriated Negroes danced, triumphant over the sacking of a white man's home. Or perhaps there would be no survivor to tell of the night attack, but only some charred ruins, no less eloquent, in the morning. The colonists lived in constant terror, dreading attacks that did not come and paralysed with rage and fear over those that did.

The whites had blindly brought upon themselves the necessity, almost, of abandoning the colony. Unnecessary ill-treatment had driven the rebels to an extremity of revenge; inhuman tortures had seared in their brains a deep hatred for the masters. It is true that some of the plantation owners were as kindly disposed as the custom of the age permitted, but most of the planters ill-used their slaves. There was nothing to prevent it; the magistrates were fellow-planters, and no Negro could bring legal testimony. The black had no redress except in blood. The idea of revolt spread.

After twenty years of intermittent raiding, the colonists had had enough of it; Governor Mauricius, the head of the colony, sent a detachment of troops into the bush to find the rebels and conclude a treaty of peace, "so ardently desired." After some skirmishing they arrived at the rebel headquarters and opened negotiations with the Bush Negro chief, named Adoe. There, in 1749, a treaty was signed, the conditions of which were dictated by the rebel blacks. Chief Adoe

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was presented with a large cane bearing the arms of Surinam, and, a more material gain, he extracted from the white negotiators a promise to turn over to him a large supply of arms and ammunition, along with other presents. As a pledge of friendship, Adoe presented them with a bow and arrows. Then the troops returned to Paramaribo.

The news of the treaty was variously received. Many planters expressed satisfaction, others doubted whether peace would be lasting. Some denied the advisability of handing out to the rebels more firelocks and gunpowder. As one man expressed it: "I must indeed confess that, notwithstanding the good intentions of Governor Mauricius, nothing appears to be more dangerous than making a forced friendship with people who, by the most abject slavery and ill usage, are provoked to break their chains and shake off their yoke in pursuit of revenge and liberty, and who, by the trust which is placed in them, have it in their power to become from day to day more formidable."

The following year the promised presents were sent upstream: checked linen and salt beef, spirits and salt pork, firearms and ammunition. The caravan was intercepted by an independent band led by a rebel called Zam Zam, who carried off the stock and murdered the carriers. Chief Adoe waited for the presents which did not come, and after long waiting finally concluded that they had never been sent, that the white men had cheated him with false promises. He declared the peace broken, and resumed the raids.

Thus an accident reopened the series of terroristic scenes;

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death and destruction again spread throughout the plantations. The imprudent governor was recalled to Holland, and never returned. Six hundred Dutch troops arrived as reinforcements for the colony, but they could not allay the distress. Besides the Saramacca rebels, a new revolt started in the region of the Tempati Creek, and was immediately successful. Dutch troops sent against it were defeated repeatedly. By 1757 the whites were again compelled to sue for peace, and a parley was agreed to.

The colonists were represented by two commissioners, Sober and Abercrombie, who carried presents with them to the Tempati rebels under the command of Chief Araby. He represented the new generation of Bush Negroes, born not in Africa but in the South American bush and having no personal memory of the slave ships. He received the white commissioners politely, and quieted their apprehensions regarding the ensuing parley.

During the negotiations a rebel captain named Boston became irate at the commissioners' presents and wanted to know whether the Europeans thought that the Bush Negroes could live on combs and looking-glasses. He ended his oration with a demand that the two commissioners be held as hostages. Another captain, bearing the African name of an Ashanti chief, Quaco, took the opposite side and spoke in defence of the white representatives. Finally Chief Araby dictated the terms of peace, making Abercrombie draw up a list of conditions to be agreed to, and merchandise to be delivered. The Dutch government was allowed a year to

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648 175 deliberate; at the end of that time it could choose either peace or war. The Negroes were ready for either.

When a bush chief finishes speaking, all the members of the gathering nod their heads and say *"Daso,"* or "That's so." As Araby finished, there was a general murmur of *"Daso."* The parley concluded with an elaborate entertainment for the commissioners, after which they were sent back to Paramaribo, accompanied by no escort, but with these proud instructions:

"We desire you to tell your Governor and your court that in case they want to raise no new gangs of rebels they ought to take care that the planters keep a more watchful eye over their own property, and do not trust them so frequently in the hands of drunken managers and overseers, who by wrongfully and severely chastising the Negroes, debauching their wives and children, neglecting the sick, etc., are the pain of the colony and wilfully drive to the woods such members of stout active people who by their sweat earn your subsistence and without whose hands your colony must drop to nothing and to whom at last in this disgraceful manner you are glad to sue for friendship."

Suing for peace, with the Negroes they had formerly owned body and soul! There was a vast difference between these arrogant, victorious blacks and the whipped slaves still coming over the Middle Passage. These men were no longer servile; they were free.

At the conclusion of the year of grace two commissioners came up the river again, bringing with them the required

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presents; again the white man acknowledged his defeat. The ~~618~~ presents were delivered to the Bush Negroes at Joca Creek, 175 where the parley had been held, fifteen miles east of Tempati. Here at the Ouca Plantation in 1761 a treaty of twelve or fourteen articles was signed by the white commissioners and sixteen blacks. They all took the sacred oath and drank each other's blood, mixed with spring water and ceremonial clay, from a calabash cup, while the *Gadoman* or high priest "with upcast eyes and outstretched arms took heaven and earth to witness."

The multitude responded *"Daso."*

Araby delivered four of his captains as hostages to Paramaribo, where they were entertained at the Governor's table. Considering an oath sacred, the Negroes never violated the treaty. They adhered to it so strictly that, when other Negroes escaped, this tribe helped the whites recapture them, thus incurring the enmity of many of their own people.

No sooner had the treaty been signed with one tribe than a fresh rebellion broke out in another part of the colony. The next revolt, at Berbice, was unsuccessful; the Bush Negroes were defeated and their villages looted. The whites were aided in this by three tribes of native Indians, the Caribs, Acaways, and Arawaks. When the Dutch general handed some Bush Negro loot over to these Indian allies, his own troops became dissatisfied and deserted. Seventy deserters marched overland through the bush, attempting to join the Spaniards on the Orinoco River. They were intercepted and captured by a large force of rebel Negroes, who executed

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fifty of them. Shortly afterward the entire revolt was quelled, and the Negro leaders burned alive six at a time. The remaining twenty deserters from the Dutch militia were brought to Paramaribo and executed by being hanged or broken alive.

After this setback, other rebellions broke out afresh in a different section of the colony. These outbursts were known as the Cottica rebellion, and were more formidable than even the Saramacca and Tempati revolts. Pillage was extended in every direction, and the colonists at Paramaribo lived in daily terror of a massacre. By 1772 hope of maintaining the colony had almost been relinquished; the Dutch were ready to admit that the finishing blow had been given to Surinam. The planters abandoned their homes and flocked to Paramaribo for refuge. Even there they could hear at night the throbbing of Negro drums.

In a desperate effort to save the settlement, faithful slaves were manumitted and armed, to act in conjunction with the colonial troops against the rebels. To send Negro against Negro was a hazardous resolve. At the same time the Society of Surinam appealed to the Prince of Orange for aid. Two companies of mercenaries, twelve hundred strong, were dispatched to the relief of the stricken plantations.

This was perhaps "the most extraordinary expedition ever undertaken by European troops." Among the officers of the expedition was an Englishman by the name of Captain John Stedman, of Tifferton, Devonshire, a free-lance soldier of fortune, who wrote a long account of his adventure. His *Nar-*

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His Nar- 648 175 [11]

rative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam in Guiana on the Wild Coast of South America is a record of strange happenings that could not occur again.

Many of the soldiers died en route, so reinforcements of three hundred men were sent from Amsterdam. Two hundred and fifty of these died on the way. The remainder were prepared for active service against the rebels. Acting with them were three hundred auxiliary troops, consisting of emancipated slaves under the command of white leaders. Such Negroes, freed for the purpose of fighting, were known as "rangers." They were given trousers and scarlet caps, armed with firelock and sabre, and taught the Dutch password, *"Orange!"* to distinguish them from rebel Negroes and prevent "disagreeable mistakes" during the fighting.

Under the command of the rebel leader Baron, whose very name sufficed to cause panic in any part of the colony, the Bush Negroes had established a strong settlement between the Cottica River and the seacoast. One proud rebel town was known as *Boucou,* which means *"Dust."* It was entirely surrounded by swamp, with secret paths under water, leading to gates in the palisade wall. Before the gates Baron placed swivel guns. On the whole it had the reputation of being "no contemptible fortification." There was another camp of rebel Negroes at Lee Shore, between the Surinam and Saramacca rivers. From these armed camps they made night forays into the plantations, robbing fields and stealing women.

Against Boucou the desperate Dutch sent a detachment

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of troops under the command of Captain Mayland. They camped on the border of the swamp, finding they could not cross it. Baron raised his white flag of defiance and the militia fired many useless fusillades. They planned a siege and a bridge of boats across the marsh, but both plans were abandoned when a ranger discovered an underwater path to the fortification.

Making a feint attack by rapid firing on one side of the swamp, Mayland drew the defenders to that side. Meanwhile, the troops crossed on the opposite side, swarmed over the palisadoes without encountering opposition, and fell upon the blacks from behind. Boucou was taken in a swirl of carnage.

Most of the Bush Negroes managed to escape; finding ten or twelve rangers stuck in the swamp, they slit their throats on the way. The white men's prisoners were put to horrible deaths. Stedman describes one as hanging for three days on a hook through his ribs, trying to drink the rainwater that rolled down his chest. He was finally killed with the butt of a musket. The story also tells that another captive was being flogged near the suspended Negro. When the beaten prisoner cried out in pain, the first one taunted him with weakness, saying, *"You mong? Da boy fasee,"* which means, "Are you really a man? You act like a boy!" Other captives had wooden splinters driven under their fingernails and toenails, after which they were quartered by being tied to four horses driven in different directions. As for young women being roasted alive, says Stedman, "Nothing was

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more common in the colony." This is probably an exaggeration. 148 175

Not long after this, Captain Mayland, the victor of Boucou, was caught with his troops in an ambuscade while fording a swamp. Up to their armpits in water, the Europeans and their rangers were unable to return the rebel fire. The whole party was wiped out. A few captives were taken back to the rebel village, stripped naked, and beaten to death before the assembled population to provide an afternoon's amusement.

But the colony was saved for the whites. Cruelties continued on both sides, those of the civilized Europeans equalling those of the savage. On one plantation Stedman saw a young woman hanging to a tree, being flogged with two hundred lashes. Seeing her stripped and covered with blood, he protested mildly. Enraged that anyone should venture to come between him and his slaves, the overseer ordered the punishment doubled, and the lashes went on.

In 1775, when the revolutionary spirit was also beginning to flame in North America, the mercenaries entered the Guiana jungle against the rebels for the last time. In this detachment were two hundred European troops and a hundred rangers, commanded by a Colonel Fourgeod. The first day they travelled due east from Paramaribo, cutting their way eight miles through the bush with billhooks. The following days they continued this laborious chopping of a path, and at night campfires were forbidden lest they draw the attention of the Bush Negroes. They proceeded in three columns, guarded by flankers. After marching a week, they stumbled

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upon the rebel village of *Gado Saby*. The name means "God Understands." The Dutch detachment came out of the bush into an oblong rice field, where the rebels met them with an impassioned defence of the village. The black warriors fired from the ground or from behind trees. Each was supported by two others, one to take his place if he were killed and the other to drag his body away. Trusting to their *obeiahs*, or talismans, for protection against enemy bullets, the rebels exposed themselves rashly and many were killed.

The Dutch found the opposing troops manœuvred in a masterly manner. The defence of the village was admirable. The Negroes even cut down trees about the village to impede the Dutch advance. It was soon noticed that, although the Bush Negroes were firing rapidly, few Europeans were injured and none were killed. Afterward the surgeons found out why. They discovered in the wounds many pebbles, coat buttons, bits of silver, but no bullets. The rebels had none. This was all that saved the whites from extermination. The blacks surrounded them, had them at their mercy—but lacked bullets to clinch the victory.

Pressing on, the Dutch reached the town. The Negro chieftain, Captain Bonny, immediately set fire to it, and his troops retired in good order. This turned out to be a very effective stroke, for it left the whites with no shelter and little provisions. Every rebel rice field that the whites could locate had been burned, as usual.

Camped on the charred site, the rangers amused themselves by bowling with severed human heads. It was, as Sted-

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man noted, a *condree fasee*—a custom of the country. Rifles were found, all lacking flint, for which the Europeans had good reason to be thankful. In the village were found silver spoons pillaged from the estates, along with china and other ware. The rebels were observed to be healthy, and lacking nothing but bullets and flint. Their diet contained ingenious makeshifts. Salt they obtained from the ashes of a palm tree, and butter from condensing the fat of the palm tree worm.

That evening the rebels crept near the European encampment and began shouting curses, threats. All night the jungle resounded with the yells of rebels and the replies of rangers. The hatred of the revolted blacks for the loyalist rangers knew no bounds. They swore that no ranger should ever leave the bush alive. They dared the planters to enter the woods. Finding so much communication going on, Colonel Fourgeod decided to join in, and began "hallooing." He offered the rebels food, drink, and freedom if they would lay down their arms.

The reply was curt and contemptuous. They "damned him for a French bastard," saying, "We are free men. You soldiers are white slaves, hired to be shot at for fourpence a day."

Fourgeod swore to pursue Bonny to the end of the earth. The following day the troops pressed on to the next village, *Cofaay,* which signifies "Try Me." They found it deserted. Lacking ammunition, the blacks had realized the impossibility of putting up a defence. So they made a great noise in the night, under cover of which Cofaay was evacuated. While the loud shouting was going on, the food of the next village had

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been packed in baskets and transported to a safe place. The Dutch, tricked by the wily Bonny, found Cofaay bare.

Provisions being imperative, a small detachment was sent back to Paramaribo for them. The detachment was cut off by the rebels. European soldiers were spared, but every ranger was killed, since the rebels had sworn none of them should leave the bush alive.

After one or two other engagements, in which the Bush Negroes were defeated, with the help of Indian tribes, the expedition returned to Paramaribo. Both sides had fought each other to a standstill. The Europeans were weary of the hazards of the bush, of the vicious fire-ants and carnivorous mosquitoes. Above all they knew that if the Bush Negro had possessed ammunition they would never have returned.

From this point on the warfare ceased by common consent. The Bush Negroes were left alone to duplicate in the American forest their former life in Africa. The slaves who never revolted were finally emancipated in the nineteenth century, and their descendants today, still living with the whites in Paramaribo, are known as Town Negroes. The bush tribes call them *bahkra schlaff*, or "white man's slave."

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It may be of interest to recall the names of some of the old villages which constituted places of refuge for the escaped slaves in the early days and from which many of the forays were conducted against the white plantations. In the jungle between the Surinam and the Saramacca rivers were the following:

Villages	*Headmen or Captains*
Acoro-kriki	Aletoo
Attoma-kriki	Attama
Awara	Davo
Congo-kriki	Attoma
Doussou-kriki	Mufinga
Cabrolte	Primo
Janwiri-kriki	Kwakoo, Klaas, Pedro
La Motte	Foolon
Matawarie	Adoo
Loango	La Motte
Toofinga	Coffie
Wana	Mathysie
Pada	Pambo, Magondi, Darie, Samsam

Higher up the rivers, separated from these, were still more villages continuing right on to the Brazilian frontier, even on to the Orinoco River, where some of the escaped slaves mixed with the Indians.

The villages between the Surinam and the Marowyne rivers were the following:

To the north of Paramaribo, between the Duivelsbroek

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

648 (Devil's Pants) Swamp and the ocean was the village of
175 No Meli Mi (Don't Touch Me).
103
361 On the Upper Surinam River at the source of the Surnau
621 Creek and to the north of the plantation Maasstroom there was a village called Broos Condree; on the right bank of the lower Commewyne River, the village of the Headman Kopro-Kanoo (Copper Cannon) was situated.

On the Upper Cottica were the following havens of refuge:

[22]

Villages	*Headmen or Captains*
Gado Saby	David Voro
Corsary	Pamo (Governor)
Meli Mi	Araby
Mi Sa Lasi	Boston
Tesi	Abram
Boesi Krei	Thoma
Kwami Condree	Coffie
Karoe Condree	Jan Prado
Areisi Condree	Quakoo
Boucou	Baron
Aroukou	Bonny, Joli Coeur

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni
Paramacca

façades of their huts are often elaborately carved. The drums and other Bush Negro implements take the usual West African form, but the treatment of the motifs among the Boni differs somewhat from that given by the other Bush Negro tribes. The spiral, snake, liana, and coil designs are less in evidence; the patterns are usually more angular in character than similar pieces from the Saramaccaner and Aucaner. Animal, human, and bird figures are more common in the designs of these French Guiana tribesmen, as the collection brought back for the American Museum of Natural History attests. Also, personal decoration by scar-tissue patterns seems to be less in evidence among the Boni. In all other respects, however, their culture seems identical with that of the other Djukas.

The Paramacca tribe, now numbering about 500 in population, was founded by one man and two women, who were slaves on a plantation in the Upper Commewyne River. They escaped by way of the Tempati Creek in 1813, then travelled over the watershed to the head of the Paramacca Creek, a tributary of the Marowyne River. For a long time they built villages at the head of the Tempati Creek and later at the head of the Paramacca Creek, being afraid to go into the

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Paramaca

175 Marowyne River on account of the Boni and Aucaner tribes,
361 who were long established there and who were much stronger numerically than the newly arrived Paramaccas. They finally came out of the creeks, however, and founded a village on the Dutch side of the Marowyne River near the mouth of the Paramacca Creek. The main seat of the tribe is
[103] now the village of Langa Tabiki (Long Island), which, as the name denotes, is an island in the Marowyne River. This is the village of the Granman. Beside Langa Tabiki, there is
361 103 the village of Amerika Condree (from a Bush Negro captain called Amerika). This village is situated on the island of Boni Boro, which means the "Bonis arrived." A third important village is that of Akodo Condree, captained by one Akodo and situated on an island of the same name in the Marowyne River. There are lesser villages on the Dutch bank of the Marowyne extending just past the mouth of Gran Creek. The Paramacca village of Seeton Ponta (Pointed Stone) is situated on the French side of the Marowyne. The older villages in the Paramacca and Tempati Creeks have long since been abandoned.

115 In Seeton Ponta we had a long talk with an old Captain
159 Koffay who claims to be some eighty years of age and whose appearance certainly bears him out. He is the grandson of one of the original women slaves who escaped and aided in founding the tribe. He can remember his grandmother telling of the terrible privations of the early days when they first escaped into the jungle, how starvation nearly overtook them on a number of occasions, how they wandered for forty-

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

It is impossible to trace all of the individual African tribes from which the Djukas came. The relationships have been too much confused by the ravages of time and the depredations of the slave trade. The first slavers plied their trade along the coast, picking up a few natives here and there, but with the passing of years the growing demand for slaves rendered this practice inadequate. So the slave factories were established, and the trade extended far back into the interior of Africa. The resulting body of slaves was a conglomeration of natives from practically every tribe around the Bight of Benin, the Abo, the Conia, the Blitai, Congo, Gango, Konree, Riemba, Loango, etc.

Aside from the aforementioned, Douglas enumerates the following African groups as contributing slaves to Surinam: the Calabari, Doomakookoo, Foola (or Fooloppo), Gola (or Gongola), Mende, Madingo, Papa, Pro, Temne, Tjamba, and Wan-Wie Negroes. The Negro woman, Semire, sentenced to death in 1836 for killing and eating Negro children, must have been from one of these tribes. This suggests that the practice of cannibalism was not unknown among some of them. Douglas also cites Hartsinck for other African tribes and regions whence came many of the Negro slaves of Dutch Guiana:

"The Ardras or Dongo Negroes came from a part about fifty miles north-east from Ardras, and do not make the best slaves. Born in slavery and brought up for agriculture, they do not like service, but when treated well they are good slaves. The men, women, and children have for a mark some

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

005 "One may find also Abo and Papa Negroes, who are very willing when treated well; the last named have a certain poison under their nails with which they are known to poison their adversaries so that they pine away.

"The Coromantyn Negroes have a good heart but cannot stand wrongs or punishment without reason, and if this happens they take a gun or a knife to take vengeance, and if they are not successful in this they very often cut their own throats. These Negroes are very well built, they have no marks whatsoever, only a very smooth black skin.

"The Loango Negroes or Gangoo Negroes are the very worst. They are cannibals and will kill one of their own kind to feast upon when celebrating the wedding of the king. They also file their teeth so as to be able to bite off one's finger. They are hated and feared by the other tribes for their treachery and cruelty, and when these people desert they hide themselves in the bush living on all kinds of reptiles such as lizards, snakes, frogs, and other creeping reptiles."

Thus, some idea may be obtained of the varied sources whence came the ancestors of the present-day Bush Negro tribes.

175 619 Perhaps it will suffice to say that the Djukas are descended from the tribes of the Gold Coast, Ivory Coast, Slave Coast, Dahomey, Nigeria, Muni, Cameroons, Liberia, and the general adjacent equatorial interior of West Africa. Most of these natives were forest people, and after being transported across the ocean they could adapt themselves without great difficulty to the similiar jungles of Surinam.

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

From the very earliest times some of the slaves managed 175 ● to escape. They found in their new home a number of palms and plants with which they were familiar in Africa. The bush was much like the African bush. The rivers of Dutch Guiana resemble the West African watercourses. Grown men do not change their habits readily, so it was only natural that these escaped blacks should continue, so far as possible, the mode of living to which they were accustomed in Africa. Huts, paddles, clothing, ornamentation—there was no necessity for them to alter their old habits. They could build the same kind of hut, fashion the same kind of dugout canoe, hollow out tomtoms, and dance the ancient dances of the Old World. For the most part they could duplicate in the South American jungle the manners and habits of their West African birthplace.

If the Bush Negroes had remained slaves for a number of generations, it is probable that they would have adopted to a large extent the white man's culture and forgotten their own. Because of the plasticity of human nature in childhood, any race bred in captivity changes its original characteristics. Thus blood-relations of the Surinam slaves, transported to the Carolinas and Virginia, sloughed off their West African culture and became "civilized" in the white tradition. But this was not the case in Dutch Guiana. The first slaves to escape belonged to the original generation brought over on the slave ships. As the years went by they were joined by other Negroes, many of them born in Africa. A few years of enforced residence among the whites was

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

175 not sufficient to make them adopt the white man's culture.

Many of the rebels, indeed, had been born on the sugar plantations and raised in close contact with European civilization. These were probably inclined to modify in many details the West African habits of their parents. But the white man and his magic were the object of universal hatred among the blacks. They had no incentive to adopt European ways, when they were proud of their own. And when they escaped into the bush, they found a typical West African culture reconstructed in the Surinam bush by the escaped slaves who had preceded them. It was as though a section of West Africa had been picked up bodily and deposited almost intact in the South American jungle. To this day, therefore, we have many evidences of West African culture in the life of the Surinam Bush Negroes. Their entire social structure, with the exception of a few items borrowed from the
[177] Indians and certain European inventions like gunpowder which were forced upon them, is analogous to that of the Old World.

178 Conditions were not the same in every particular. In
182 West Africa there is iron ore, and the art of iron working was invented and carried to a high point of perfection by the African natives. There is little iron ore in Surinam, so that the art of working it is lost to the Bush Negroes. A limited quantity of iron weapons and implements was pillaged from the plantations, and all of it was probably converted immediately into arrow-points, hatchets, and bush-knives, to carry on the guerilla warfare against the despised Europeans.

/5 cont./

Chapter I

Topographical Description of the Colony of Surinam

Surinam, or Dutch Guiana, is bounded on the north by the Atlantic Ocean, on the east by Cayenne, or French Guiana, from which it is separated by the river Marowyne /Maroni/; to the south it loses itself in ancient, still unexplored forests up to where the Tumutumaque mountain range establishes the border with Brazil; finally, in the west it is separated by the river Corantyn /Courantyne/ from Berbice, or British Guiana.

The distance between the boundary rivers Marowyne and Corantyn is 56 and one half hours. According to the latest measurements, /6/ the location is between 54° and 57° west longitude and 2° and 6° north latitude, and the colony has an expanse of 2500 square G. M., of which scarcely 700 are as yet known.

The name Surinam stems, according to general opinion, from an Indian tribe called Surinen which was found there at the time of discovery, but which later withdrew to the branches of the Amazon River.

The river was never called anything other than great coma (great river) by the natives.

The population, according to the latest reports offered to the States General, numbers 67,709 souls, as: 15,567 free, 38,042 emancipated on July 1, 1863, 8,000 Bush Negroes, 1,000 Indians, 5,000 slaves in hiding or escaped.

Chapter II

Origin and Settlement of the Bush Negroes

The Bush Negroes stem from runaway slaves in former times, and later, in 1712, from the slaves who were hidden in the forests by their masters in order to escape the levy of Cassard, but did not return to their masters; after the peace that they concluded with the Whites on September 19, 1762, they received the name of

/6 cont./

175 pacified Bush Negroes. From then on they received from the
648 Netherlands Government annual presents consisting of guns, herbs, lead, tobacco, rice, salt, dram, and so forth.

648 In later times, however, these were gradually decreased
829 by the government and finally completely abolished, as a result of which the Negroes no longer so willingly and without remuneration want to be of service to the government; since they believe that with the conclusion of the peace they came to an agreement with the government that on their part the Whites would no longer be hindered in anything, while they would endeavor to assist the government whenever that should be necessary, in return for which the presents mentioned above would be handed out to them annually on the part of the government. At present they complain about their treatment by the government and refuse to believe that they can and may trust the Whites.

101 The Bush Negroes are divided into four tribes: /7/
103 1st. Aucaners, who have their dwelling place, Auca, on the
133 river Marowyne; and they have their working places on the river above Cottica, where they come from the Marowyne by way of the Wanakreek. Among themselves they are called Joeka /Djuka/ and by the Whites, Aucaners, after the plantation Auca, where on 19 October 1760 peace was concluded with them.

2nd. Saramaccaners, who live on the river above Surinam, principally near the waterfall Arasoebanja near Gjengjen and Prakieki, and have their working places along the same river and in the cove /kreek," creek, cove"/ Taaiboto Kouloegrou and Kassipora. They are called Saramaccaners by the Whites, after the river of that name (where they formerly lived), and among themselves Wousie or Moejére.

3rd. Mantoewari, who have their dwelling place on the river above Saramacca and their working places along the same river on Maripaston and in the cove Mindrinetie. They are names like the Saramaccaners, since they, too, although separate, live on the same river.

/7 cont./

101 4th. Bonnie /Boni/ Negroes, living on the river above Marowyne; [175] until 1862 they were in a state of slavery among the [567] Aucaners, but at that time, through the intervention of the government, they were released from it. Their name is supposed to be derived from a former runaway slave who had placed himself at their head.

Chapter III

Government, Laws, Administration of Justice

643 Each of these tribes, except for the Bonnie Negroes, has [292] a chief whom they call granman (governor); the uniform given to him by the government is a blue tunic with epaulets and a cocked hat with white plush.

Among the Aucaners the chief is called Byman, a cunning, courageous, and prudent man, around 63 years old.

The chief of the Saramaccaners is called Abram, an infirm old man who is very weak of character and has little influence.

The Mantoewari Negroes have a chief called Kalkoen, who, although aged and infirm, can nonetheless still be called firm of character.

631 /8/ Under their chief they have a certain number of captains and council members. The former are divided into bush captains, who take command in case of war, and into house or land cap- [554] tains, who deal with internal matters with the chief. The token of their prestige given to them by the government consists of a large staff with a round silver ball (drum-major's stick), on which is the Netherlands coat of arms with "Je maintiendrai."

344 They have a large open shed which serves them as court and which they call kroetoehoso (probably derived from the English "courthouse").

682 Their legislation is very limited. One who kills another is punished with death; one who poisons someone suffers death by torture, provided that substantial irrefutable proof exists. (See Chapter XI below.) If the death penalty is not appropriate, the

B
R /509 cont./
19 October 1958 – January 1959), expeditions whose principal aim
114 was the sociological study of these populations.
121

/510/

Social Structure and Way of Life

B
10/ The Boni Refugee Blacks. The Boni are one of the above-mentioned
[175] tribes of the Refugee Blacks, reconstituted in the course of the
eighteenth century by rebel African slaves who escaped from
B Surinam plantations (Dutch Guiana).
[131] These tribes (Saramaka, Djuka, Paramaka, Boni) live for the
[161] most part along the rivers of the interior of Surinam. They group
together a total of 25,000 persons.
B
161 With very rare exceptions, the Refugee Blacks are pure Africans.
[144] These populations, vigorous and well adapted to the country, have
experienced in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries
a remarkable demographic increase, attested to by all the authors.
Descended from small rebel groups which could not haye contained
more than a few hundred women, they are now estimated at more
than 25,000 persons.
B
162 The Boni of the Upper Maroni, the subject of the present study,
103 number approximately 800, of whom 660 are on the French bank
[161] (the villages of Boniville, l'Enfant Perdu, Loka, Asisi, Papaïston,
and Kormotibo) and 140 on the Surinam bank (the village of Kotika).
These villages were established long ago.
B
Each of them groups together a matrilineage, i.e., the
613 descendants in the uterine line of one single founding ancestress;
621 certain villages know their genealogy in its entirety back to this
769 ancestress, who must have lived at the end of the eighteenth
century. The members of the lineage are united by the cult of the
B ancestors, which binds them firmly to their natal village and to
[622] their land. The social system is based essentially on this cult,
[793] the chief of the village being above all the priest of the ancestors.
Strictly speaking, there is no marriage, but only an acknowl-
B
581 edged concubinage which entails neither a contract between the

Boni
Emerillon SR8
Rucuyen SR12
Carib SR9
Locono SR10

C E L R 101

/11 cont./

3) The autochthonous Indians are represented on the Maroni Basin by three groups:

C [131] [162] [433] [177] [178]

—The Arawak and the Kalifia (Galibi) (about 500 persons) live downstream from Saint-Laurent; they live in symbiosis with the population of the city, whom they supply with fish and manioc. A century of contact with the Creole population has produced a certain alteration in their customs and traditional way of life, but the essentials of their tribal organization remain intact.

R [131] [162] [178]

—The Oayana /Oyana/ or Roucouyennes /Rucuyen/ (about 250 persons) live on the Litani upstream from the Boni with whom they are in close relationship. They have not undergone any alteration in their race or their way of life.

E [131]

—The Emerillon, who belong to the Tupi-Guarani group, form a small grouping on the way to extinction.

B 114

The Refugee Blacks. —Ethnic origin. No comprehensive anthropological study has as yet been undertaken on the Refugee Blacks. Not possessing the specialized knowledge necessary for tackling this study, we have left it entirely aside. Besides, we doubt that it would give important detailed information on the ethnic origin of the Refugee Blacks. Study of archive documents concerning the slave trade would certainly give more particulars; it is certain from now onwards that their origin is very diverse; the slave trade took on provisions principally on the coast of West Africa, but also in the Congo and in present-day Angola; the African words figuring in the present dialects come from the populations of these various regions. So it is not surprising to meet rather variable skull forms and statures among the Refugee Blacks.

B 175 144 [192]

B 141

The Refugee Blacks are in general of medium stature, that of the adult men being between 1 meter 60 and 1 meter 75; the average is a little below 1 meter 70.

/11 cont./

142 Certain somatic characteristics are found frequently among them. The /12/ majority of individuals are dolichocephalic,
144 slightly platyrrhine, have thick, flattened-out lips. These characteristics bring more especially to mind the populations of the Ivory Coast and Dahomey. The human types of the Congo and Equatorial Africa in general are rarely seen among the Refugee Blacks. This is a surprising finding, given the diversity of origin
• 175 of the slaves imported into Surinam. The fact can be attributed to the very special conditions under which the tribes of Refugee Blacks were formed: much more than from massive revolts, they were born of kinds of "maquis," enlarged from age to age, of all those who escaped at the peril of their lives. One can think that the majority of these indomitable people must have come from the large tribes of the African west, more combative and more thoroughly organized. The archives of the colony of Surinam, like those of French Guiana, pointed out especially that the "Coromantin" Negroes (that is, it seems, the ones who came from the Ashanti country) were so intractable that they could hardly be utilized and that they were found at the origin of most of the revolts.

144 Even if the Refugee Blacks do not represent one race in the rigorous sense of the term, they give, compared with the Blacks of America in general, a striking sensation of homogeneity and
175 unity. Actually, it is important to remark that they have practical-
144 ly only African blood; mulattoes were rare in Surinam plantations in the 18th century, for the documents of the time attest that most of these, more sensitive to malaria than the Blacks, were employed as workmen in Paramaribo. They must have had few chances to run away, and few of them would have been able to stand for very long the rebels' exceptionally harsh conditions of living.
144 The Refugee Blacks, thought of as representatives of the main African Negro race, can thus be considered a homogeneous

/17 cont./

162 —On the Lawa a group of a little less than 680 persons is
103 settled on the French bank (villages of Agodé (Boniville), Asisi,
361 Loka, Tabiki (l'Enfant Perdu), Lapé (La Paix), and Papaïston).

—In proximity to this grouping subsists under Dutch control the village of Kotika (Cottica), grouping about 150 persons.

—In the region of Abounasounga two small groupings live in symbiosis with the Djuka. Finally, in the lower course of the Maroni exist three villages: Apatu, Ma Imma, and Wétiti. The whole represents about 150 persons.

361 These villages are stable: Kotika, Lapé, Asisi, Kormotibo
182 were already in existence at the beginning of the 19th century
[175] and their names figure in the report of the Franco-Dutch border mission of 1861; by contrast, farming habitations are moved according to the necessities of agriculture and fishing; thanks to this organization, a relatively numerous grouping can, in the interior of Guiana, in spite of conditions imposed by the geographical environment, conserve complete stability and a firm attachment
[171] to the ground. It is useful to compare this organization with the basic instability of the Indians of Guiana, for it shows very well that this instability is ascribable to psychological and sociological factors and not at all to the geographic environment.

101 The Boni designate themselves by the term Aluku nēnge. The meaning of this word is forgotten. It is possible that Aluku was the name of an ancient chief, or of the founding ancestress
[613] of a lineage. On this subject it is to be noted that the name of the most ancient ancestress known of the Dju lineage, who can be thought of as living at the end of the 18th century, was called
[175] Aluku. This name has been used since the origin of the tribe;
[103] indeed one reads in the interrogation of the woman prisoner conducted in 1847 by the French at Oyapok that her village was called Loukou (1).

/17 cont./

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1. Archives du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer, Guyane /Archives of the Ministry of Overseas France, Guiana/, A3-02.

611 /18/ Villages and Kin Groups

Among all the kinship systems which existed in the African tribes from which they issued, the Refugee Blacks came back unanimously, and from the beginning, to matrilineal filiation.

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613
643

Their social system is symbiosis, under the authority of the grand man, of a certain number of localized matrilineal kin groups.

613 Matrilineal kin groups of the Boni. With the Boni the basic grouping is the lineage, in the rigorous sense of the term, understanding by that all descendants in maternal line from a single ancestress.

To designate the kin groups the Boni employ almost interchangeably the words lo (troop, band) and bɛɛ, womb. In fact these expressions correspond to two variant interpretations of the same notion:

614 bɛɛ: matrilineage in the widest sense, understanding by that all persons knowing that they are issue of the same ancestress, even if the genealogical ties are forgotten, and even if these persons are scattered in several villages under different authorities;

lo: lineage fraction grouped in one village and constituting a distinct social unit.

The lineage bears a name whose origin is forgotten by present-day Boni; some of these names allude to a plantation or to a slave-owner, for example Lapé (La Paix: a plantation of the Cottica River); as for others, the name of the founding ancestress may be involved. Example: Kawina (name of the lineage constituting the village of Papaïston).

/23 cont./

621 175 [166] [103] Agodé was founded by Grand Man Ochi, probably about 1895, at the time when the Boni were required by the settlement of the Lawa Dispute to evacuate the villages they were occupying on the Surinam bank. The name Boniville was given by the gold miners; it was used never at all by the Boni.

621 613 [103] The Yakubi or Kotika lineage forms the important village of Kotika (1). It is one of those which have remained best grouped.

1. This word alludes to the river where the rebellion of 1772 began.

[423] [241] [103] Its members have exclusive rights over the region included between Abunasunga Falls and their village. They have farmed there for more than a century, and this is why the region is called Abattis Kotika.

613 621 175 [648] Kotika is the oldest Boni village. It is one of those founded by the survivors of the battles against the Dutch when, about 1815, they settled again on the Lawa. Until about 1895 nearly all the Boni were grouped in one large village, each lineage occupying a different quarter. At the time of the settlement, unfavorable to France, of the Lawa Dispute (1895), the various lineages emigrated, founding especially the villages of l'Enfant Perdu, Loka, Boniville, and Papaïston. Only the members of the Kotika lineage stayed, in full agreement with the grand man, so that the ancestral land might not be completely abandoned. [648] [628] Thus the inhabitants of this village are nowadays under the authority of Surinam, without ceasing, for that reason, to be faithful to the grand man and maintaining normal relations with the other groups.

613 614 [124] The genealogies reconstituted in 1957 by systematic interrogation of the old people of the group had led to three distinct fractions which we shall call Kotika 1, 2, and 3, tracing respectively back to ancestresses named Kénéya, Amawi, and Oka.

/35 cont./

593 This organization, compared with what is found in the greater part of Africa, is very advantageous for the wife, who [581] enjoys total independence. But against this she has great instability of unions.

581 601 The union of man and woman has so little of the character of a marriage that in the Boni language no word exists which means, strictly speaking, "husband" or "wife." They say: mi libi anga X = "I live with So-and-so.

174 591 How has the social and matrimonial system of the Refugee Blacks been set up? One could believe that one of the systems of Western Africa was purely and simply transposed, but this is not the case at all. In this domain as in that of beliefs, the ancestors of the Refugee Blacks elaborated an original synthesis out of numerous sources.

The African nations from which the rebels issued were certainly, in large part if not in the majority, patrilineal. This is especially the case of the Fon of Dahomey, from whom have been borrowed important cultural elements, especially the principal cults of possession. The matrilineal ones all conceded patrilocal residence, that is, the wife's leaving her village and settling in her husband's village.

[175] The 18th-century rebels, the archives attest, included a heavy percentage of "salt-water Negroes," born on African soil; such, for example, was Codio Coromantin, one of Boni's lieutenants; those who had not been born in Africa had, for the most part, been instructed in an African tradition by a father or uncle. One can be sure that once having attained freedom they sought to organize their villages according to the family custom by which they had been brought up, that is, to set up, some a patrilineal and patrilocal society, others a matrilineal society /36/ but with [643] patrilocal residence. We know for example that Boni had chosen his son Agosu as his successor.

/36 cont./

1714 671 The formation of patrilineages must have been hampered by numerous divorces; in addition, in case of divorce, the wife unquestionably aspired to take her children with her, not recognizing any contract between the two groups of kin which might be able to affect her free will; one can also be certain that the children, if consulted, must have followed their mother in most cases and [586] joined their maternal kin group. This tendency remains perfectly observable in our day; we shall see all its importance when we study how the children are raised and what tutelage is exercised upon them.

Now there is no patrilineage conceivable, if, in case of divorce, the children do not stay with the father. Patrilineal societies exist in which the wife is free, were it only the Peule society, where divorces are very frequent. But African custom has it that in a patrilineal system, by reason of payment of the dowry, the wife's kin lose all rights over the children. They have entered the man's kin group and his ancestral cult.

The formation of matrilineal and patrilocal groupings must also have collided with analogous difficulties, the women not willingly leaving their village of origin.

One can rather easily imagine that in the initial period of the formation of the /37/ new tribes, the different matrimonial systems coexisted; then the patrilocal groups, less viable, progressively broke up, while the present custom was being established.

• 175 643 This point of view is confirmed by an exact piece of information collected at the end of the 19th century by the explorer Coudreau. Upon the death of Agosu, son of Boni, it was his son Gongo who succeeded him. But after the death of Gongo, the succession went according to the matrilineal system.

583 [591] Another important aspect of the matrimonial system of the Refugee Blacks is the absence of any compensation or payment. Even if it happens that a woman leaves her lineage permanently in order to settle in her husband's village and found a family there

/70 cont./

159 562 613 [591] In March, 1957, Awéni, head of the Afi lineage, established in Asisi, was concerned about regrouping the members of his lineage and especially bringing back to Asisi Magdaléna (c20), a woman of about 45 years who had settled in Kormotibo near her husband L... (†1955), with her children and others whom she had raised. He went to Kormotibo and pointed out to her that since her husband was dead, she no longer had any reason to stay there and that she should come back to Asisi. Magdaléna insulted him in front of the inhabitants of the village, proclaimed that she had no orders to receive from anybody; then when he insisted, she armed herself with a stick and chased him across the village as far as the landing place. He had to re-embark precipitately to the laughter of the Kormotibo people.

Political and Legal Powers

643 613 [173] The grand man. The head of the Dikan lo fills the office of grand man of the Boni. The present grand man, Difu, was about 67 years old in 1958.

Oral tradition has kept the names of his seven predecessors:

Gongo (Dikan lo)	1810-1840	dates noted according to Coudreau
Labi (Adam?) (Dikan lo)	1840-1870	
Atyaba (Kotika lo)	1870-1876	
Anato (Kotika lo)	1876-1891	
Ochi (Dikan lo)	1891-1915	
Awensay id.	1917-1936	
Difu id.	since 1937.	

[195] According to information collected by Coudreau in 1887, Gongo was the successor to Agosu, himself successor to Boni. Upon the death of Labi, there were only women and children in the Dikan lo. The office of grand man then passed to the Kotika lo with Atyaba and Anato. It then came back to the Dikan lo with Ochi.

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776 [576] character, touchy and vindictive. In speaking of them one says Papa gadu (papa does not mean "father"; it is a term of respect used for important personages (2)). They are believed

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2. This is the interpretation given by the Refugee Blacks. However, 18th-century documents on the origin of the slaves draw attention to the existence of an African tribe called Papa. Allusions contained in documents of the archives of Surinam, recently studied by Madame Silvia W. de Groot, would tend to identify the Papa with one of the populations of present-day Dahomey. In this hypothesis, the cult of the papa gadu would represent an archaic form of the Dahomey cult of the snake gods.

776 [825] they are believed to have as habitual bearers the boa snakes (dagowe) (3) which

3. This word appears to be the deformation of the Dahomey word dāgbe.

are not to be confused with the great water snakes (anaconda) [824] that the Refugee Blacks call mboma sineki. They may also reside in silk-cotton trees (kankan tree) and in the trees called katu udu (Bombax surinamiensis).

[787] The Vɔɔdū which incarnate themselves in humans may be of either sex; if a male god is concerned, it is called "tata vɔɔdū."

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619 829 The Saramaka are very highly esteemed everywhere, for it is unanimously assumed that their magic is stronger, their techniques more perfected, than those of the other tribes.

175 648 Relations with the Indians. The relations between the Boni and the Oayana Indians are extremely curious and interesting. They were probably established from the end of the 18th century on. Several writers have stated that Boni and Indians fought each other for a long time; the examination we made of authentic archive documents, unfortunately few in number, capable of throwing light on the history of the Maroni, does not confirm this hypothesis (1). One can think on the contrary that symbiotic

175 726 1. The only combats pointed out took place about 1840 between the Boni and the Wayakulé "Oyaricoulets" Indians, a very primitive tribe who lived on the Oulémari and was itself at war with the Oayana.

175 648 727 The Boni were certainly already allied with the Oayana at the time of the battles on the Maroni in 1793, since after their defeat the survivors, grouped around Agosu son of Boni, took refuge on the Maruini River which they went up as far as the region of its sources, where nobody could catch up with them. Now it was precisely there that the Oayana Indians were living at the end of the 18th century. They would not have tried this maneuver if they had not had the certainty of finding refuge

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175 648 727 with their allies. The sites of their villages, marked on Coudreau's map (1888) are in immediate proximity to those of former Oayana villages.

175 relations must have been created rapidly and in a very natural
648 fashion. The grand man of the Boni is in a way the suzerain of
[643] the Indian chiefs; this situation was not imposed by force; it results from the privileged situation of the Boni on the river, which until recent times obliged the Indians to deal through them in order to trade with the outside world.

Although the Boni took advantage of this situation in days gone by to impose arbitrary rates of exchange upon the Indians, this relation must not be imagined as the exploitation of conquered by conqueror. It is based on the absolute respect of each
648 829 group for the beliefs and social structure of the other, and an activity for each befitting its inclination. The proverb says:
[439] "To the Boni the river, to the Indians the forest." Thus it is that the Boni traditionally buy arrows from the Indians, while the latter buy paddles from them; the meaning of this symobl is perfectly understood by both.

648 Marriages between the two groups, without being for-
582 bidden, are regarded as contrary to custom (2).

159 156 643 648 582 2. The marriage of Grand Man Awensay to an Indian woman about 1915 was inspired by complex motives. Toward the end of his life, Awensay could no longer stand the Boni, his imperious personality putting up badly with their individualism and their taste for discussion. He had established the Indian country a farming habitation in which he lived nearly all